SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

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of

THE FOURTH SESSION

of

THE FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of the

PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA

ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1988

by

HIS HONOUR

THE HONOURABLE ALAN R. ABRAHAM, C.D, D.Eng.

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

MR. SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

I welcome you in Our Sovereign's name to this Opening of the Fourth Session of the Fifty-fourth General Assembly of the Province of Nova Scotia.

My Government mourns the death of Hon. Peter M. Nicholson, for many years a distinguished Member of this House and a senior Member of the Executive Council.

We are saddened by the death of Colonel A. W. MacKenzie, former Member for Guysborough and a Member of the Executive Council for more than a decade.

We deeply regret the death of Victor G. Cardoza, former Member for Digby.

We greatly mourn the death of Henry Muggah, the much-loved Clerk of this House for many years and a very distinguished senior civil servant before that.

My Government extends the warmest congratulations to Dartmouth's Robert McCall on his extraordinary accomplishment at the Winter Olympics in Calgary. Mr. McCall, in winning the Bronze Medal in Ice Dancing, has earned a well-deserved place for himself in the hearts of all Nova Scotians and in the sport history of our Province.

NOVA SCOTIA - CANADA - THE FUTURE

In a world characterized by transition and change, my Government believes that flexibility is key to adapting to the new conditions of the global economy.

Nova Scotians are people of strong will, who are determined to take advantage of opportunity and who face the challenges of the future with optimism.

The traditions, dignity and diversity of Nova Scotians are treasured provincial resources. My Government respects and encourages the unique diversity of our people and our regions. These must be retained and enhanced as we move into the future.

My Government wishes to work in partnership with all Nova Scotians to enhance economic growth as a means of maintaining and improving our quality of life in our communities.

As we go about our daily lives, we find that information, technology, innovation and competition are the underlying themes of a rapidly changing economy.

Nova Scotians must respond positively and flexibly to those themes if we are to achieve the advancement and growth necessary for all of us to receive our fair share in this new competitive world.

You will be asked to approve legislation implementing the Meech Lake Accord. My Government was pleased to be a signatory to this Accord, which ensures a united Canada, responsive to the needs of the regions, with all provinces as full partners in Confederation.

To achieve excellence in our quality of life, we must lead with excellence in public administration in Nova Scotia.

My Government, as part of its strategy of ensuring Nova Scotians are prepared to succeed in a changing world, has recently concluded the most extensive analysis ever conducted of government programs, services and methods of delivery to the people.

Following the review, my Government has undertaken an extensive planning process. The goal of this process is for government to be more responsive to the needs of people and in so doing manage public spending more effectively.

The result has been major government renewal initiatives announced in steps over recent months. The Cabinet was restructured. New ministries were created to enable a more appropriate response to contemporary trends.

A wide-ranging realignment of the senior public service followed the Cabinet reorganization as a second management response to properly fit the new structure of government.

A new Opportunities Growth Board of Cabinet has been established to ensure more effective and more contemporary policy development and planning of programs. This new initiative is tailored to meet the needs of Nova Scotians as we manage our transition into the 1990's.

These major governmental innovations enable government to respond more flexibly, effectively and efficiently to the new needs of the people and to contribute to an economic climate through which people, communities and regions can achieve their economic fair share.

The goals are:

- To enhance economic growth through partnerships with the private sector;
- The maintenance and improvement of community services;
- The improvement of our unique quality of life.

Nova Scotians are expressing a renewed sense of self-reliance and a renewed dedication to the protection and enhancement of the quality of life in Nova Scotia. We all desire greater quality as we build our common future.

Therefore, my Government will continue its strategy of listening to and consulting with Nova Scotians in planning, selecting and delivering the services they need to achieve the kind of quality of life Nova Scotians desire.

In this Speech From The Throne, my Government is setting specific strategic priorities for building the Nova Scotia of tomorrow:

1. Strengthening economic growth in all communities;
2. Creating and ensuring fairness among all Nova Scotians;
3. Maintaining, improving and protecting our unique environment;
4. Ensuring quality and excellence in education, training and retraining, and creating greater opportunities for continued lifelong learning;
5. Building provincial and Canadian unity as an equal partner in Confederation.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Nova Scotians realize that they hold in trust for future generations our environment and that we must deliver to those generations a better quality environment.

You will be presented with legislation and my Government will continue to announce other initiatives that comprise the Nova Scotian **Environmental Enhancement Program.**

My Government is negotiating an agreement with the Government of Canada establishing an inter-governmental partnership of provincial, federal and municipal participants to clean up Halifax Harbour.

The Halifax Harbour cleanup will be a six year, $203 million project.

A key initiative in my Government's environmental building block is the agreement, signed earlier this month with the Government of Canada, to limit and manage acid rain.

My Government is determined to work with and provide leadership to the private and public sectors in strengthening and enforcing regulations to protect and enhance our environment.

My Government is implementing the recommendations of the hazardous wastes task force made public last year.

Nova Scotia reached agreement with the Government of Canada last year for the cleanup of the tar ponds in Sydney. This important environmental enhancement initiative is a major step in ensuring a high quality environment for our province.

ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH DIVERSIFICATION

SMALL BUSINESS - KEY TO GROWTH

As part of major government renewal, the Department of Small Business Development was established. It is my Government's goal to create a climate that will make small business big business in Nova Scotia.

Small business in Nova Scotia provides jobs for approximately 100,000 workers. Small business payrolls amount to $1.5 billion annually. This continued growth and contribution to permanent job creation in Nova Scotia is of vital importance to our continued economic success and to the stability of countless communities. It is my Government's intent to ensure continued dynamic growth of the small business sector.

The government has the responsibility of building partnerships with the men and women who comprise the vitally important small business sector of our economy.

My Government, through the new Opportunities Growth Board, will implement **a Rural Opportunity Growth Program**--a program designed to ensure a balanced economic foundation for growth and opportunity in rural Nova Scotia, as we prepare to compete and win against our competitors.

The goal of the Rural Opportunity Growth Program is to create thousands of new jobs in rural Nova Scotia. This will be achieved through:

- **Doubling of funding of the existing** and very successful **Rural Industries Program.** In addition, the guidelines of this program will be broadened to better fit the changing needs of our towns, villages and rural communities.

- **Doubling the funding of the Nova Scotia Training Employment Program (NSTEP).** This program has regularly exceeded its target of creating 1,000 new jobs annually. NSTEP, which is administered by the Department of Advanced Education and Job Training, provides employment opportunities in communities throughout the province through on-the-job training.

- **Doubling funding of the Consulting Assistance Program**, which provides small business consulting assistance in communities throughout Nova Scotia.

- **Establishment of the Northumberland Institute,** a centre for community and rural development to be located at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in **Truro** with two initial satellite offices in **Oxford** and **Pictou.** The Northumberland Institute will assist rural communities in the development of community strategies and action plans to ensure our rural areas are prepared to take advantage of the opportunities of the 1990's.

The **Rural Opportunities Growth Program** will be the responsibility of the new Department of Small Business Development and will be coordinated through the Opportunities Growth Board. There will be a multi-faceted departmental approach where all relevant departmental resources from across government will be dedicated to ensuring the success of this program.

Excellence and competitiveness are essential in this important and key growth area of small business. That is why the Minister of Small Business Development will be continuing his program of **Small Business Consultation** with concerned Nova Scotians to ensure that actions are being taken to enable small business to grow and meet the needs of a changing Nova Scotia marketplace.

A substantial majority of businesses established in Canada in recent years have been started by women. These businesses have an above-average rate of success, yet recent Nova Scotian studies demonstrate that women encounter more difficulties than men in securing financing and professional business support for the establishment of their new enterprise.

There are 12,000 women in Nova Scotia who are self-employed, and my Government wishes to see that figure doubled over the next five years. My Government is dedicated to providing these new entrepreneurs with the means to protect their opportunity and enhance their success.

Small business provides us the means to extend opportunity. Therefore, my Government will strengthen the **Women Entrepreneurs' Program,** allocating to it **three times its current financial resources.**

It is essential that young Nova Scotian men and women understand the opportunities available to them through enterprise building.

Since Nova Scotia's future economic growth depends on the entrepreneurial spirit of its people, my Government will develop and implement a new educational program on entrepreneurship for our public schools. This program will be developed by the new DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT in conjunction with the Department of Education.

Through the establishment of new **Small Business Service Centres** in the regions of the province, my Government is ensuring that small business financing decisions are decentralized into the local community and made by experienced local business people in those communities, instead of being highly centralized in Halifax.

Through these centres and their boards, the approach to small business leadership and assistance is new, innovative and local in nature. This is a major step in ensuring economic equality of all regions in Nova Scotia, especially at the local community level.

This is a prime example of how government can work in economic partnership with the local communities and their people.

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY - KEY TO THE FUTURE

INTERNATIONAL TRADE:

Earlier this year, the Governments of Canada and the United States signed an historic Free Trade Agreement. My Government believes that freer trade, implemented in accordance with the agreement, and accompanied by assurances for the protection of Regional Development Programs, and adjustment assistance for Nova Scotian industries, will be an economic benefit for all Nova Scotia.

To effectively monitor and deliver adjustment measures to Nova Scotian industries and workers, my Government established **A Private Sector Advisory Panel on Adjustment to Free Trade.**

The adjustment panel is currently building a management plan from which it will consult with Nova Scotians on matters pertaining to an orderly and managed adjustment process over the 10-year implementation period.

Although Nova Scotia exports to more than 100 countries, the vast bulk of foreign sales take place in New England and the mid-Atlantic States. In 1986, the United States accounted for $1.4 billion or 73% of Nova Scotia's exports. The New England region accounted for 75% of those exports.

My Government is establishing a new **Business Futures Program** to assist small business in becoming aware of the importance of planning for future market opportunities and competition brought about by the Free Trade Agreement.

To meet this new requirement, a three year, $750,000 program will be established to cost-share the use of consulting firm services for the development of company business plans, employing technology and marketing initiatives. This new BUSINESS FUTURES PROGRAM will be administered by the new Department of Industry, Trade and Technology.

Increasing aggressive competition of international business requires Nova Scotians to be on an equal business educational footing with their foreign competitors, in order to compete and win.

My Government will establish an **International Management Development Centre,** located in the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax to assist Nova Scotian exporters to excel in the international business marketplace.

This new International Management Development Centre will be built in partnership with our university, business, industry and labour communities.

TECHNOLOGY:

More than 10,000 Nova Scotians are working in engineering and scientific research, and there are 125 companies involved in the emerging Nova Scotian computer industry.

The Department of Industry, Trade and Technology has created an interdepartmental committee of government to begin the research and writing of a **Nova Scotia Technology Strategy Green Paper.**

This Green Paper on technology strategy will be the discussion document used in a consultation process with participants from industry, the universities, businesses and the Nova Scotia Council on Applied Science and Technology. From this process will come the final recommendations to government.

The most advanced computer-automated manufacturing training facility in North America has been developed by our Government in conjunction with Pratt & Whitney at the Nova Scotia Institute of Technology in Halifax.

At this automated manufacturing training centre, Nova Scotians are trained to work in the new Pratt & Whitney plant at the Aerotech Park in Halifax County. Other major business organizations in Nova Scotia are also employing graduates of this program.

Nova Scotia is at the forefront of the development of computerized integrated manufacturing. This radically new manufacturing process is being implemented at the Litton plant at the Aerotech Park.

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE:

My Government will establish, in partnership with business, industry and labour, a **Centre of Excellence Building Fund** in the amount of $10 million over five years. My Government challenges the private sector and will match dollar for dollar contributions to this building fund by industry, business and labour until that $10 million goal has been reached.

My Government will implement a new program to establish **Centres of Excellence** in different fields of applied research and technology in Nova Scotia.

The new **Nova Scotia Council on Applied Science and Technology** will be charged with the responsibility of identifying and making recommendations to government on the types and locations of these centres across the Province.

In preparing its recommendations to government, the council on applied science and technology will consult with and listen to business, labour, industry and universities to ensure their perspectives are included in building this initiative.

OUR TRADITIONAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES

The traditional natural resource sectors continue to be an economic development priority of my Government, along with the development of our community-based industries.

These traditional resource industries are continuing a pattern of steady growth.

AGRICULTURE:

The agricultural industry experienced a healthy increase of 8.3% in prime cash receipts in 1987.

My Government, in consultation with the agricultural sector of the Nova Scotia economy, has prepared an overall development strategy for Nova Scotia's agricultural industry. This strategy is the basis of a new, five year **Agri-Food III Agreement**, which my Government expects to sign with the Government of Canada.

Key components in this $60 million agreement include:

- Market development
- Human resource development
- Technological innovation
- Land and soil management

The previous agreement, which expired late last year, resulted in 2,000 additional jobs in Nova Scotia's agricultural industry.

FORESTRY:

In the forestry sector in 1987, the growth was extraordinary, with the value of pulp and paper production for the first nine months of 1987 increasing from $375 million to $440 million over the year before.

Since 1982 two forestry agreements with the Government of Canada are resulting in the expenditure of $117 million on forestry development in Nova Scotia for the seven years ending March 31, 1989. The results of the implementation of these agreements include 6,500 managed woodlots, involving 2,000 direct jobs in Nova Scotia, as well as a record level of reforestation and silviculture activity.

This revitalization of forestry has in turn resulted in the capital expansion plans of the pulp and paper industry in Nova Scotia.

My Government is currently negotiating a new $125 million, five year agreement with the Government of Canada to maintain the ambitious silviculture program, as set out in the 1986 new forestry policy.

This agreement will also fund research and development requirements and provide training and extension services in the Department of Lands and Forests. This new agreement will have similar positive economic benefits for our people and communities across Nova Scotia.

FISHERIES:

My Government is dedicated to building on the outstanding success of the Nova Scotia fishery in the 1980's.

The Nova Scotia fishery continued its strong economic performance through 1987 and registered an estimated 5% increase in 1987. Fish landings were up over 30% in 1987 over 1986.

We recognize the continuing importance of the fishing industry to our province and our way of life.

As part of our commitment to Nova Scotia's fishing industry, we have strengthened the funding of the Fisheries Loan Board to provide further assistance to people involved in our fishing industry.

Late in 1987, my Government made clear its pledge and commitment to ensure there is no drilling on Georges Bank.

MINING:

The past year was a banner year in terms of mineral exploration and production. Exploration investment in 1987 was valued at over $80 million.

The total value of mineral production reached a record high of $445 million, which represents an all-time record increase of over $57 million.

The Government will continue to place high priority on mining by negotiating with the federal government for a new **Mineral Resources Development Agreement.**

TOURISM

Tourism currently accounts for 30,000 direct and indirect jobs in Nova Scotia and adds $700 million in annual revenue to the provincial economy.

The forecast is that tourism will grow into a one billion dollar a year industry in Nova Scotia by 1992.

My Government is taking steps in partnership with the industry to encourage the development of tourism as a year-round industry in Nova Scotia.

Our tourism marketing strategy calls for the development of new tourist attractions in the various regions of Nova Scotia.

The first building block in this component of our tourism strategy will be the Upper Clements Heritage Theme Park, which will attract tourists to the western region of our province and will accordingly generate income and employment in that part of Nova Scotia.

Other destination tourist attractions will be developed for the same purpose in other regions of Nova Scotia.

Tourism businesses represent the kind of enterprise we must nurture and grow in order to fully diversify our provincial economy and create more permanent employment across Nova Scotia.

STRENGTHENING OUR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE:

My Government believes a quality transportation infrastructure is essential for economic success in the years ahead. Roads and highways are key to building and maintaining a successful tourism industry and in developing other industries throughout Nova Scotia.

That is why in 1987 my Government entered into a new Canada-Nova Scotia Highway Strengthening Agreement. Through this agreement, the Department of Transportation and Communications will make improvements valued at $100 million to primary highway links throughout the province over a four year period.

PROTECTING TO BUILD

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE:

My Government awaits a report from the Marshall Inquiry, established by my Government, and will give prompt and appropriate consideration to its recommendations.

SOLICITOR GENERAL:

The November 1987 government reorganization included the establishment of the **new Ministry of the Solicitor General.** This new Department of Solicitor General will conduct, in consultation with our community partners, an immediate, comprehensive review of police services in Nova Scotia called **"The Future of Policing in Nova Scotia."**

Through this review and analysis, the Solicitor General's Department will evaluate all police-related services provided in the Province, the role of rural municipalities in funding law enforcement, the role of the Nova Scotia Police Commission and community-based crime prevention needs.

The Department of Solicitor General also has set as a priority development of a comprehensive training and education plan for municipal law enforcement officers.

PAY EQUITY:

My Government is dedicated to equal opportunity and social justice for all Nova Scotians. To achieve this goal we must do all in our power to ensure true equality for Nova Scotians.

Therefore, you will be presented with legislation to implement a program for pay equity for women in the Nova Scotia work force.

WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE:

To assist with development of government policy with respect to issues affecting women within the Public Service, my Government will establish a **Women's Directorate** reporting to the Minister responsible for the Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE:

My Government is pleased to congratulate the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia on its 75th Anniversary.

The Women's Institute of Nova Scotia continues to play a vital role in the development of family life in our small communities.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION:

Recently my Government made public the Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Workers' Compensation, which recommended substantive changes to the Workers' Compensation delivery system.

The Minister of Labour is currently consulting with concerned groups and individuals regarding that report.

Many of these recommendations will be implemented in consultation with affected employers and employees.

EDUCATION - FUNDAMENTAL TO SUCCESS

COMMUNITY COLLEGES:

My Government is establishing a community college system in Nova Scotia. My Government knows that capturing the future for our Province is not an easy task. Key, however, to achieving that task is a sound education and training system through which our people are educated and trained for the jobs that will be available.

This system will move to create greater opportunities for cooperative study with industry and business through on-the-job training.

Our quality education and training programs are the key to success in the 1990's. Through quality, contemporary education and training programs, young and older Nova Scotians will gain the ability to succeed in changing times.

To ensure quality and excellence in curriculum, my Government made public the report of the **Advisory Committee on the Public School Program**. The committee recommended major changes in the high school program. The Department of Education is consulting with concerned Nova Scotians with regard to the new high school program recommendations made by that committee.

It is essential that all Nova Scotians, regardless of deficiencies in their basic educational skills, be able to participate fully in the economic and social life of the Province, no matter where they may live within the Province.

The Department of Advanced Education and Job Training will appoint a Literacy Coordinator to work with our numerous volunteers and concerned Nova Scotians who help raise the level of literacy.

The Department of Advanced Education and Job Training will lead this initiative in cooperation with the Department of Education.

SOCIAL POLICY:

The Department of Community Services, in partnership with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities and other concerned groups, will undertake a task force review of the levels of cost-sharing for municipal general assistance.

This task force, led by the Department of Community Services, will include representatives of the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities. This task force will report to Government by September 30th.

Nova Scotia has entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada to enhance the employability of citizens on Social Assistance. It is anticipated that more than 1,000 social assistance recipients will benefit from this program over a two year period.

In 1987 my Government sponsored the first Nova Scotia Conference on the Family. That event, held in Antigonish, resulted in a number of positive recommendations to provide greater opportunities for families in Nova Scotia.

You will be presented with legislation implementing these recommendations.

SENIORS:

By the year 2000, 13.5% of Canada's population and 14.1% of Nova Scotia's will be aged 65 or over. The Senior Citizens' Secretariat is continuing its indepth study of the future impact of aging in Nova Scotia to the year 2000.

My Government has appointed the **Home Care Advisory Council** and the **Provincial Coordinator of Home Care.**

My Government has prepared a strategy plan for implementation of our home care initiative. Training programs are underway to assist municipal agencies with home care staff training requirements.

Our home care program is an important step in providing greater independence and enhancing the quality of life of senior citizens in Nova Scotia.

My Government has completed a review of the Seniors' Rental Program and will be taking steps to enhance and enrich it.

My Government working with the municipalities, will introduce reforms in the policies regarding homes for special care. For instance, Nova Scotians moving into a home for special care will no longer be required to surrender their family home.

Legislation will be introduced to increase and mandate provincial cost-sharing of municipal costs incurred by Nova Scotians in nursing homes and homes for the aged.

My Government, in consultation with Nova Scotian municipalities, will introduce reform to address the cost of extended stay in hospital for Nova Scotians awaiting placement in homes for special care.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

This is the third year of the **Housing Development Program** announced in 1986. The strategic goals for the first two years have been exceeded. The total number of social housing units committed under this program is 2,800 - 300 more than the program objective.

The Housing Development Program has an overall strategic goal of 5,000 new housing units by 1991.

The Department of Housing, in conjunction with the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, will review the existing multi-storey senior housing stock to determine the possibility of retrofitting these facilities with elevators.

FITNESS AND HEALTH:

Nova Scotians have access to one of the world's best health care systems.

My Government is continuing its commitment to provide modern health care facilities throughout Nova Scotia. We are currently in the third year of our long term, planned program of hospital construction. This construction program provides thousands of jobs now and in the future, and will create an environment of health care excellence for all Nova Scotians.

The Department of Health and Fitness is addressing the issue of lifestyle patterns and their contribution to disease. This department will work to assist Nova Scotians in increasing control over and improving their health through the philosophy of preventative medicine.

To assist in achieving this new goal, a new senior position of Director of Fitness and Health Promotion will be created to provide fitness leadership.

My Government will develop a program in partnership with disabled groups, to expand the range of technical aids available free of charge to disabled Nova Scotians 18 years of age and under.

911 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM:

My Government, through the Emergency Measures Organization, will institute a 911 (nine-one-one) Emergency System.

Under this system, the digits 911 will provide access to emergency services. Nova Scotia will be the first Canadian province to implement the 911 emergency number approach.

The adoption of 911 will ensure prompt, secure and coordinated response to emergencies in Nova Scotia.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, my Government reaffirms its dedication to building a better Nova Scotia and a better Canada in the 1990's.

Important and innovative legislative measures will be placed before you for your consideration.

The Public Accounts for the year ended 1987 will be presented for your consideration, as will Estimates for the fiscal year to begin April 1, 1988.

To these and all other matters which will come before you, I ask your most careful attention, praying that sound judgement and Divine Providence may guide you in all your deliberations and decisions.

God Save the Queen.

God Bless Nova Scotia.

God Bless Canada.